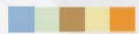**ElectioNet™**

State of New Jersey Office of the Attorney General Division of Elections

Piloting Results Lessons Learned

NEW JERSEY

Deliverable SVRS085

Presented to:
Michael Gallagher
SVRS Project Manager
Department of Law and Public Safety
Trenton, New Jersey

Presented by:
Saber Solutions
111 W. Liberty St.
Columbus, OH 43215

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1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The purpose of this document is to explore the lessons learned during Pilot phase of the New Jersey Statewide Voter Registration System Project and to describe how the lessons will be applied to improve the implementation in the remaining 18 New Jersey counties.

The pilot implementation involved the counties of Ocean, Mercer, and Essex. The use of a piloting approach was necessary and beneficial for several reasons. There is lower risk to all stakeholders in a limited pilot rollout. Lessons learned from the Pilot process can be applied in the subsequent full rollout. And, the time between the Pilot and full rollout may be used to make software changes, build on strengths, and adjust resource allocations where needed.

2. PILOT IMPLEMENTATION: LESSONS LEARNED & PLANS FOR ROLLOUT

The following items summarize the lessons learned during the New Jersey Statewide Voter Registration System Project (NJSVRS) pilot implementation. Included with each item is the resulting adjustment or effect on the project plans for the rollout to the 18 remaining New Jersey Counties.

2.1. Tracking Software Application Errors

Lesson Learned – Numerous errors and functional issues in the application were identified and corrected during the pilot process. The JIRA tracking system was used to track all issues from the time they are reported to the time they are corrected through the implementation of a bug fix or enhancement. But the entry of issues by only vendor and State project staff was causing delays and potentially limiting the flow of important feedback on how the system was functioning during the pilot; and timely reporting of all problems was important.

Affect on Rollout – To ensure timely reporting of problems, the project implementation staff would be training county staff to enable them to log into JIRA and enter new issues as necessary. Further, this enhances the ability of county officials to track the status of issues pertaining to their county and it provides expanded awareness of issues opened by other counties.

2.2. Validation of Software Application Corrections

Lesson Learned – Validation of software updates came to light as a critical measure, as it was determined that numerous software updates were put into place without being properly vetted first. Project participants became frustrated when they encountered problems which they thought had been fixed.

<u>Affect on Rollout</u> – It was determined that a State staff member and a vendor analyst need to validate software updates before they are considered ready for release and before bugs are considered fixed. The State will continue its close watch over issues being tracked in JIRA, as will the vendor's project management, development, and other staff.

2.3. Pilot Scheduling – Adjustments to Rollout Schedule

<u>Lesson Learned</u> – The timing of the pilot may have been premature, based upon the readiness of the application. Numerous software functions were still not available, and some unit testing had not been completed when the pilot implementation began. This delayed completion of the Pilot.

<u>Affect on Rollout</u> – The schedule for the rollout to the remaining 18 counties also was adjusted to allow the development team and testers to resolve application issues. This schedule adjustment necessitated the need to plan for refresher training for the 18 counties.

2.4. Data Conversion – Introduction of the Data View Process

<u>Lesson Learned</u> – Data Conversion entailed four data pulls which provided the pilot counties and the conversion team with the opportunity to refine the process and review the data conversion results. But the final data pull and conversion were implemented when the pilot counties went into production.

This data conversion approach for pilot counties did not give county officials an opportunity to review and evaluate their final converted data through the application prior to their Go-Live date. Thus any necessary data corrections would have to be made through the SVRS application on the pilot counties' live systems.

The addition of an intermediate step of data review, as was later provided through the Data View process, would have made this review process go more smoothly.

<u>Affect on Rollout</u> – The Data View process would be used in all counties to facilitate data conversion validation and correction.

The Data View process involved a proactive rather than a reactive approach to identify any data conversion issues. After each county's final data pull, its data was put through a conversion engine and subsequently reports were generated through SVRS. These reports were reviewed by county officials in Data View sessions which were conducted by the change management team. The results from this process allowed the conversion team to address identified data conversion issues, including any missing data elements, prior to going into production.

2.5. Data Conversion – Resource Augmentation

<u>Lesson Learned</u> – The volume of data conversion errors discovered during pilot county rollout indicated numerous issues with mapping of data elements from legacy database to SVRS production database.

<u>Affect on Rollout</u> – A dedicated database analyst was deployed to work with county legacy database administrators to coordinate and communicate clarifications needed by the conversion vendor Aradyme to correctly map data elements.

2.6. Rollout Staff Application Familiarity

<u>Lesson Learned</u> – Most rollout staff had not been involved in the requirements gathering and definition, or software development and testing. These factors coupled with the high degree of customization and "just in time" software revisions, as mentioned in item 2.3, at rollout presented a challenge for the rollout staff to gain training proficiency in order to effectively train pilot counties.

<u>Affect on Rollout</u> – Additional trainers were brought on for the larger rollout and additional in-house preparation classes were conducted for the rollout staff.

2.7. Hands-on Training for Counties

<u>Lesson Learned</u> – Numerous training issues were discovered during the pilot county rollout underscoring the need for on-site hands-on training in addition to Track 2 (functional) training and go-live support. The primary issues encountered relate to the quantity of material to be covered during training, as well as recent software functional revisions which were added to the training.

<u>Affect on Rollout</u> – Additional on-site training and support would be provided to all counties during the larger rollout.